

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. released the following statement today after a series of House Appropriations Committee votes solidifying tax cuts for millionaires, instead of restoring funding for vital services ranging from education to meals for seniors.

Congressman Jackson said:

"This is a blatant gimme to the Republican Leadership's and the Bush Administration's wealthy friends. We have leaders who claim to want No Child Left Behind, but who cut funding on almost everything a child needs from kindergarten through college. And just in case that child finds a way to educate themselves out of the mess the Republicans are making, they've thrown in cuts to programs that will help that child remain healthy.

"Apparently more working families don't have to have a member in prison to feel the oppression of 'cruel and unusual punishment.' We must stop settling for so-called leadership that says one thing in public, then does something different behind closed doors. This shadow Republican regime must be stopped before it completely shreds the social safety net, and destroys avenues of opportunity that have benefited most Americans."

Today's votes were on amendments offered by ranking Democrat David Obey (D-WI). The first amendment would have reduced the \$88,000 tax cut going to the 200,000 Americans making more than \$1 million to \$60,000 in 2004. The \$5.5 billion gained would have restored cuts in college grants, education aid to disadvantaged children, rural health care, LIHEAP and meals-on-wheels for seniors. The second amendment would have reduced the millionaires' tax cut to \$72,000. The \$3 billion savings would have helped states keep from cutting children off of the Medicaid/State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). The third amendment would have protected the amount of federal college aid millions of families were eligible for. All of the amendments were defeated on party line votes.